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## GETTING SHOTS ON TIME HELPS YOUR BABY LIVE A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

DOH-Okaloosa Observes National Infant Immunization Week



**Contact:** Ryan Mims

[HealthyOkaloosaPIO@flhealth.gov](mailto:HealthyOkaloosaPIO@flhealth.gov)

(850) 833-9240 ext. 2162

Cell: (850) 420-2198

**Ft. Walton Beach, Fla** – The Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) is observing April 22-29 as National Infant Immunization Week. Childhood shots are one of the best ways for parents to protect their children against certain diseases and boost immunity. Getting shots on time gives your baby the best protection against 14 serious childhood illnesses—like measles and whooping cough.

“Within the past three decades of my career as a doctor and public health official, I have seen the success of immunizations and the terrible toll of the diseases they prevent,” stated Dr. Karen A. Chapman, Director of DOH-Okaloosa. "Immunizations are the easiest way to make sure your baby’s body has the best defense system against the dangerous diseases that could lead to major complications and even death."

Immunizations are a shared responsibility. Families, healthcare professionals, and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that childhood shots will prevent 21 million hospitalizations and 732,000 deaths among children in the United States born in the last 20 years.

Parents should follow the recommended immunization schedule to protect infants and children before they are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases. Staying on schedule helps the immunizations provide the highest possible protection to your baby.

Ask your child’s pediatrician or healthcare provider to see if they are up-to-date on their shots. To access the recommended immunization schedule or more information about childhood vaccinations, visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents).

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